



# OPERATIONS MEMO

Update of the California Student Aid Commission

February 21, 2008

GOM 2008-04

**TO:** Financial Aid Administrators

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**SUBJECT:** California Chafee Foster Youth Grant Program  
2008-2009 Application Availability

This Operations Memo is to provide you with an update on the California Chafee Foster Youth Grant Program (Chafee Program).

## 2007-2008 Academic Year

Currently, for the 2007-2008 federal fiscal year, the California Student Aid Commission (Commission) has awarded over \$13.7 million in grants to 3,111 foster youth students. Of these awarded students, the Commission made 1,463 new grant awards and 1,648 renewal grant awards. We have obligated all of the \$13.7 authorized funds for FY 2007. As money is returned from schools for ineligible students, we will continue to offer new awards. It is imperative that all funds for ineligible students or students who can not be located be promptly returned by schools to the Commission within 10 business days of receipt of the funds.

The California Department of Social Services (CDSS) has requested that the Commission amend the 2007-2008 fiscal year Chafee contract to increase the funds by \$1 million from the 2008-2009 federal funds. We will continue to update our stakeholders on this process and the outcome.



State of California  
Arnold Schwarzenegger  
Governor

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## 2008-2009 Application Availability

The 2008-2009 *Chafee Foster Youth Grant Application* is now available on the Commission's Web site at <https://www.chafee.csac.ca.gov>. Prospective Chafee applicants who cannot access the online application can download a paper application and mail or fax it to the Commission. **Only new** Chafee applicants need to complete the Chafee application. Please urge renewal Chafee students to complete a new FAFSA as they do **not** need to submit a **new** Chafee application.

## Renewal Applicants

To make this process as easy as possible for the renewal student, the student is not required to submit a new Chafee application every year. Renewal students must submit a new FAFSA each year and their school must complete a new *Financial Need Analysis Report (NAR)* for each academic year. The 2008-2009 NAR will be available in April 2008. Students missing any required information will receive a *Missing Information Status* letter. Renewal students receive first priority in the award selection (see Selection Criteria 2008-2009 below).

## New Applicants

To be considered for a Chafee award, a **new** applicant needs:

- To complete and file the Chafee application. The student can select from 2007-2008 or 2008-2009 academic years;
- To complete and file a FAFSA for the 2008-2009 academic year;
- Have a NAR completed by their school. The Commission anticipates having the 2008-2009 WebGrants Financial Need Screen available for processing in April, however paper applications are available now; and
- A Foster Youth record from CDSS provided directly to the Commission.

## Selection Criteria 2008-2009

After consultation with CDSS, the Commission will maintain the existing selection criteria for the 2008-2009 Chafee awarding process as follows:

- Priority 1: Renewal students who have received a payment in a prior year
- Priority 2: Students who are aging out of the program
- Priority 3: Students with dependents
- Priority 4: Student who have an unmet need of \$5000 or higher
- Priority 5: Submission date of completed application

## Foster Care Eligibility Certification Form

Based on stakeholder recommendations, the *Foster Care Eligibility Certification Form*, formerly known as the *Independent Living Program (ILP) Eligibility Certification Form*, is once again available on the Chafee website <https://www.chafee.csac.ca.gov>. The CDSS provides the Commission with a list of eligible current and former foster youth on a monthly basis. The list includes students that have been identified as establishing placement under court dependency in a foster care home or group home for at least one day between their 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> birthdates and who have not reached their 22<sup>nd</sup> birthday as of July 1, of the award year. **Please be aware that not all foster youth are eligible to participate in the Chafee Grant Program.** Students in KinGap placement, legal guardianship placement, and voluntary placement, between their 16<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> birthday, may not be eligible for Chafee due to discontinued placement under court dependency.

Students that meet Chafee foster care eligibility and do not appear on the CDSS monthly list can have their files manually updated by completing and submitting the *Foster Care Eligibility Certification Form*. The student completes Section I of the form and then Section II is completed by a County authorized representative: ILP Coordinator, Social Worker or Probation Officer. The website for the listing of authorized County representatives is [www.childsworld.ca.gov](http://www.childsworld.ca.gov). Section III is completed by an authorized state representative at CDSS and the students record is updated manually in WebGrants.

### **Financial Need Analysis Report (NAR) Process**

Please continue to process 2007-2008 Financial NARs for eligible applicants. The Commission will continue to process awards with returned funds until all authorized funds are depleted. The Commission recommends that schools check the *Chafee Need Analysis Roster* for updated NAR status. Schools can also check the *Chafee Status Roster by School* using the *WebGrants Download Report Screen* which is updated every Friday. Staff anticipate the 2008-2009 NAR to be available in April 2008.

### **Web Sites for More Information**

Students can access their Chafee information on *WebGrants for Students* at <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov>. Please encourage students to use this service to check their award status or to make changes in their personal information. If you would like more information on the Chafee Program and its benefits, please visit the Commission's Chafee Web site at [www.csac.ca.gov](http://www.csac.ca.gov).

### **Contacting the Commission**

Schools may contact the Commission's Specialized Programs Operations Branch at (888) 224-7268, option 3 for questions regarding the content of this GOM 2008-04.

The Commission encourages students to use the *WebGrants for Students* at <https://mygrantinfo.csac.ca.gov>. Students may also contact Student Support Services with general Chafee Program inquiries at (888) 224-7268.

For your additional information and to better assist you in serving students, enclosed with this Operations Memo you will find a 2008-2009 Chafee Program paper application and a copy of the Chafee Frequently Asked Questions. Remember, you may download additional copies of the Chafee application at <https://www.chafee.csac.ca.gov>.

Enclosures: 2008-2009 Chafee Paper Application  
Chafee Frequently Asked Questions  
Foster Care Eligibility Certification Form  
Missing Information Status Letter (4 reasons)

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